

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATIONIN THE ABSTRACT

Please replace the Abstract with the following amended Abstract:

a' An image encoding device is provided that can transmit encoded image data without lowering the frame rate even when the transmission speed of the transmission path is lowered. An encoded region designator $[(41, 42)]$ selects the region that is to be encoded, in the input image, depending on the bit rate of the transmission path. Only such a region that is designated by the encoded region designator $[(41, 42)]$ is encoded. The encoded region designator may be one which selects the region that is to be encoded, according to the bit rate of the transmission path, and the motion vector detected by the image encoding circuit $[(2)]$. As an alternative, an encoded region designator may be used which selects the region that is to be encoded according to the bit rate of the transmission path, and the information on the designated region supplied from the outside. Also, a selector $[(43)]$ limiting the number of bits of the signal from the image signal input circuit $[(1)]$ may be provided, and when the bit rate of the transmission path is lowered, the number of bits of the input image may be adaptively switched.

IN THE TITLE OF THE INVENTION:

Please replace the Title of the invention with the following
new Title:

IMAGE COMPRESSION OF SELECTED REGIONS BASED ON TRANSMISSION
a² BIT RATE, MOTION, AND/OR REGION INFORMATION, AND BIT SELECTION
BEFORE COMPRESSION BASED ON TRANSMISSION BIT RATE.

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Before the BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS insert:

a3 Further scope of applicability of the present invention will become apparent from the detailed description given hereinafter. However, it should be understood that the detailed description and specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention, are given by way of illustration only, since various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this detailed description.

After BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS insert:

a4 The present invention will become more fully understood from the detailed description given hereinbelow and the accompanying drawings which are given by way of illustration only, and thus are not limitative of the present invention, and wherein:

Please replace the paragraph on page 9, lines 8-16 with the following amendment paragraph:

a⁵ In the embodiment 1 described above, when the encoded region designator 41 judges that the macroblock is not to be encoded, control is so made that the output of the region selector 2n is set to be zero. As an alternative, the configuration may be such that the output of the encoded region designator 41 is input to the variable length coding circuit 2e, which outputs "not_coded" (a code that indicates that the macroblock has not been encoded) when it is judged that the macroblock is not to be encoded.

Please replace the paragraph on page 12, lines 29-34 with the following amended paragraph:

a⁶ In Embodiment 2, if the boundary of the region in units of pixels, designated by the signal 7 does not coincide with a boundary between macroblocks, all the macroblocks including the region indicated by the signal 7 are encoded. However, the approximation of the designated region with the region in units of macroblocks can be made in any other method.

Please replace the paragraph bridging page 15 and 16 with the following amended paragraph:

a⁷ Fig. 8 shows the bit selector 43. A bit number determining circuit 43a determines the number of bits per pixel of the input image, according to the bit rate of the transmission path 3, and

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sends a control signal to a selector 43b. The ~~sector~~ selector 43b switches the number of bits of the signal (block-divided image signal) 1a from the image input signal. For instance, when the transmission speed is lowered, it selects and outputs the bits 1a(n) to 1a2 on the MSB side, of the input signal 1a(n) to 1a0. The selected number of bits is switched according to the transmission speed. The output of the selector 43b is supplied to the image encoding circuit 2.

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Please replace the paragraph on page 17, lines 22-36 with the following amended paragraph:

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An example of the encoded region designator 45 is shown in Fig. 10. In the drawing, reference numeral 41 denotes an encoded region designator (identical to the encoded region designator 41 of Embodiment [[41]] 1 shown in Fig. 1) receiving the output signal 5a of the transmission bit rate measuring device, and the output signal 2m1 of the motion detection circuit 2m. Reference numeral 42 denotes an encoded region designator (identical to the encoded region designator 42 of Embodiment 2 shown in Fig. 4) receiving the output signal 5a of the transmission bit rate measuring device 5, and the signal 7 supplied from the outside and indicating the designated region. The output of a logical conjunction circuit 45a

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determining the logical conjunction of the outputs of the encoded
region designators 41 and 42 forms the output of the encoded region
designator 45.
